

Portland Chapter Meeting Notes from Tuesday, May 7, 2019

Officers and Representatives present:

Paul Cone, President
Mary Edin, Secretary
Andrew Neuman, Treasurer
Rachel Whiteside, Union Representative
Elliot Levin, Research Director and Legislative Advocate
Deidre Girard, Communications Director from Seattle PROTEC17 office

Agenda¹:

Introductions
Regional Executive Council (REC) Report
Cost of Living Adjustment (COLA) Negotiations Update
Benefits Briefing
Legislative Happenings, including PERS
Membership App/PROTEC17 Communications Questions
Open Q & A

Notes:

- 1) REC Report – Paul reported on the Regional Executive Council (REC) meeting on April 13 in Tukwila. We had a good representation from Portland with a full slate of delegates attending (delegates listed here: <https://www.protec17.org/member/portland/>) The REC adopts the annual budget for the union.
 - a. The board reported that we had entered arbitration with the previous director and had won the arbitration.
 - b. We have a new director, Karen Estevenin, beginning May 6.
<https://www.protec17.org/2019/04/29/new-executive-director/>
- 2) COLA Negotiations Update – Elliot reported on the current COLA negotiations.
 - a. The Consumer Price Index(CPI) is published by the Bureau of Labor Statistics for various areas of the country. <https://www.bls.gov/cpi/home.htm>
 - b. Since the Portland Area CPI is no longer being published, we are in negotiation to adopt a new index for our contractual cost of living increase. The city is “not being great about their obligation to bargain”, but we are working in discussion with other unions in a 90-day bargaining window.
 - c. The increase in the CPI is high this year compared with previous years. For example, the West Class “A” Cities index increase is 3.9%. However, while other cities in the West average like Seattle and San Francisco compare well with Portland in their increase of cost of living, cities like Denver and San Antonio are not a good comparison, so we are trying to work out some details in negotiations.

¹ Agenda was planned not knowing if Rachel would be at the meeting, due to jury duty. So Rachel did not present a Representative report.

- 3) Benefits Briefing – Rachel reported on changes to our health benefits with the new plan year beginning July 1.
- a. Open Enrollment is May 10th-June 7th 2019.
 - b. There are NEW short- and long-term disability options. Because these are new programs, EVERYONE is eligible to enroll, even if previously denied coverage. This is a limited time offer (<https://indd.adobe.com/view/cacadafb-56df-4317-96d6-6d108f639b75>):
 - i. City pays for the Core plan, providing a weekly benefit of 40% of salary, up to \$770. The maximum weekly benefit is reached for eligible employees earning \$100,100 or more annually.
 - ii. The buy up plan is voluntary (employee-paid) and covers an *additional* 20% of annual salary, up to a total weekly benefit of \$1,730 (combined with core). The maximum weekly benefit is reached for eligible employees earning \$150,000 or more annually.
- Rachel shared slides of “example employees” and side-by-side comparison with previous City program.
- c. Mental Health Focus. The City plans to have a specific health focus each year. For Year 1 (2019/2020), the focus will be on Mental Health.
 - i. Both Moda and Kaiser plans will waive the office visit cost of copay for one year (we would like it extended permanently)
 - ii. The City will be doing on-site events focused on mental health, also partnering with the EAP program.
 - iii. The benefits office is updating their lists of mental health providers and specialized services available.
 - d. The City has agreed to reduce the copay for Telemedicine visits under the Moda plan (via OHSU), which will now be \$10 per visit instead of \$20 or \$25.
- 4) Legislative Update – Elliot reviewed the status of several bills that could affect members. Friday is the deadline to schedule hearings on these, so there may be more news then.
- a. Senate Bill 726 Oregon Workplace Fairness act. This bill extends the statute of limitations for workplace discrimination or harassment from one year to five years, bans non-disclosure agreements, and requires that employers not ask about previous harassment or discrimination claims in employment interviews.
<https://olis.leg.state.or.us/liz/2019R1/Measures/Overview/SB726>
 - b. House Bill 2016. Janus-related bill requires that unions be given contact information for new employees in their bargaining units, be given time during new employee orientations, and use employer’s email system without public disclosure.
<https://olis.leg.state.or.us/liz/2019R1/Measures/Overview/HB2016> PROTEC17

- c. PERS – no new information - waiting for Kotek/Courtney plan at the end of the week. Elliot provided general information on the plan the governor recently released, and possible legislative actions, most focused on the IAP account.
 - d. Contact Elliot Levin (elliott@protec17.org) if you'd like more info or to sign up for the political action list
- 5) Membership App/Communications Questions – Deidre spoke about recent rebranding efforts. After the Janus decision last year, it is important to make being in a union attractive. Recent changes include:
 - a. Name change from PTE-17 to PROTEC17 with updated logo.
 - b. The web site (<https://www.protec17.org/>)
 - c. Insight magazine (<https://www.protec17.org/insight-magazine/>)

In addition, PROTEC has been adding member benefits <https://www.protec17.org/benefits/>:

- a. A scholarship program
- b. A Professional Development Fund (*this is separate from the City of Portland Professional Development Fund*)
- c. Currently working on a new member app that will provide discounts and other member benefits
- d. PROTEC17 is also on Facebook!

Deidre brought extra bulletin board kits to supplement the kits received at the REC meeting. Members were encouraged to update the union bulletin boards in their work area if needed.

- 6) PDF Update – Andrew provided an update on the Portland Chapter PDF
 - a. After increasing cap to \$3,000 for this fiscal year, we have spent enough of the fund to ensure that the balance will roll over into next year.
 - b. There is still \$22,000 remaining for this year (until July).
 - c. It may take 3-4 weeks to process your application right now because the City representative on the committee has been out on paternity leave.
- 7) Open Q & A
 - a. There is a City of Portland Budget Hearing at the World Forestry Center on Thursday, May 9 from 6:30 to 8:30.